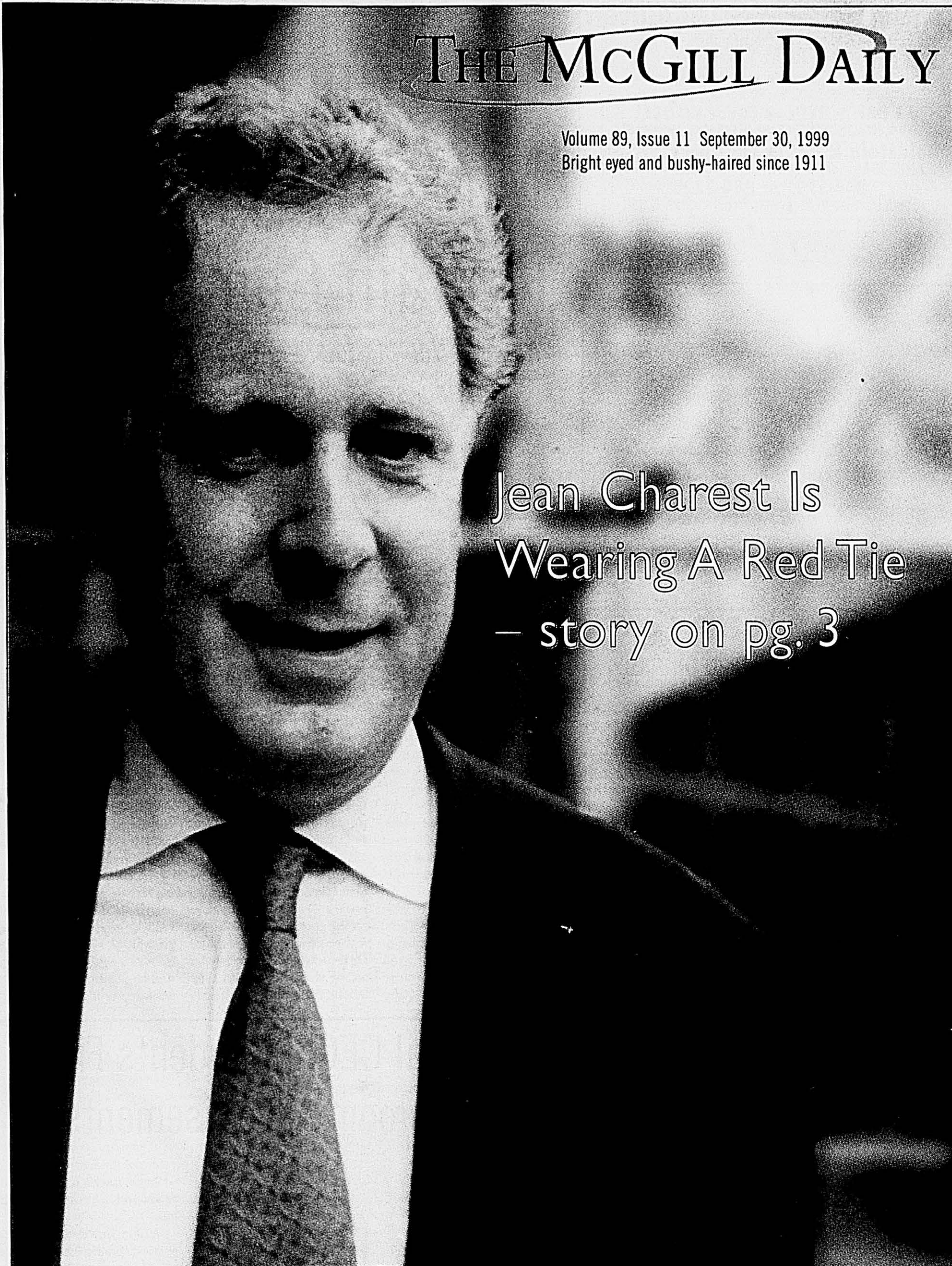




THE MCGILL DAILY

Volume 89, Issue 11 September 30, 1999
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Jean Charest Is
Wearing A Red Tie
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Principal to Ministry: We Cannot Remain Competitive

Report attempts to stop declining quality of education, seeks more government funding

BY DAVID PODGORSKI

The Principal's office has sent a report to Minister of Education François Legault detailing the urgent need for the restoration of funding to post-secondary education in Quebec.

The 50-page discussion paper, authorized by McGill Principal Bernard Shapiro, outlines a plan to seek \$80 million dollars in additional funding for McGill each year. McGill has also requested that \$500 million per year be added to the provincial budget for spending in post-secondary education.

These figures are based on the spending gap between McGill and the major Ontario universities, calculated on a per student basis. The funding for one McGill student is currently less than \$10 000 – the lowest of the ten universities included in the survey. Queen's was the highest on the list, with spending of \$17 000 for each full-time student. Laval University and Université de Montreal also had spending levels comparable to McGill's. As the report pointed out, "The drop in the level of government support has reached crisis proportions."

And students may be expected to shoulder some of the burden of rising costs. Although the principal's office makes "no formal recommendation [to] overall increases in tuition... or the unfortunate differential tax levied on non-Quebec

Canadians," it does request that the government "carefully examine the possibility of increasing tuition fees."

The report also cites differential tuition fees at the University of Toronto, specifically the way in which fees differ from faculty to faculty depending on the probable income one receives after graduation. Dentistry students at U of T pay \$12 000 dollars a year, and Medicine, Law, and MBA student fees have reached similar levels, while Arts and Science students pay less than \$4 000 for each year of study. The administration believes that "where the job market guarantees a certain income level, higher fees would not be a deterrent to accessibility." Masters students are expected to pay an additional graduation premium of \$3 000 per degree granted (up from \$600) while doctoral students' premiums are to rise from \$1 000 to \$8 000.

While this plan may result in higher tuition fees for students, they will undoubtedly reap new benefits, according to the report. A further proposal has been made to support 4 500 students through bursaries and hiring more Teachers' Assistants. New academic and internship programs would also be developed, while second language teaching programs would expand. In the field of technology, McGill also has plans to

construct a digital imaging centre, while the Faculty of Music will support a means of web-based music/audio acquisition and delivery. Budgets for maintenance and library funds would also increase. TAs will be assigned to every course, and the student/faculty ratio will return to 1994 levels.

The discussion paper must first meet an obstacle in government interest. Reports of this sort have been made before and were rejected by previous education ministers. This particular initiative differs in that it was led by Legault. It is unclear however, whether it will receive any support from other cabinet members.

"The fact that the minister asked for the document is encouraging," said Dean of Music Richard Lawton. "The fact that the government has balanced its budget is encouraging. There is a good chance that [Quebec universities] will get more funding. If that is the case," he added. "What concerns me is the funding of McGill in relation to the other universities."

Principal Shapiro is currently eliciting response to the 'Tradition and Innovation' document. The Daily would like to extend that invitation to students. For more information on how to get a copy of the document and respond, contact the University Relations office at 398-6747.

Montreal CEGEP Students Fight Washroom Advertisements

BY ALANAH HEFFEZ

MONTREAL (CUP) - Lurking in many washrooms and hiding behind stall doors, bathroom advertisements seem to be omnipresent.

But a group of Dawson College students, calling themselves I Pee Freely, wants to change all that.

"It's an invasion of personal privacy," said Eric Hanson, a second-year creative arts student at Dawson who founded the anti-ad group. "This is crossing the line as

far as advertising goes."

Last week, over 25 students met at an I Pee Freely meeting.

The group decided to pass a petition among Dawson students, and hope to have an anti-ad rally. But because Dawson, located in Downtown Montreal, is locked into a five-year contract with Zoom Media, the company responsible for supplying washroom ads on campus, the group's efforts may not be rewarded this year.

Hanson, however, hopes to convince the school not to sign up for another contract.

But Drago Kresevic, Dawson's assistant director of Plant Facilities, defended the ads.

"It doesn't do you any harm. Nobody's forcing you to read it," said Kresevic. "It's just there, and the college is benefiting."

Dawson receives approximately \$10,000 per year from the ads.

Jean's Charade

Opposition leader brings Liberal rhetoric to McGill

BY JON BRICKER

A student grabs the arm of the passing Jean Charest, gives him a thumbs up, a "way to go," and a "keep it up." And if there's still a question of where McGill's political allegiances lie, it's answered by the response Charest receives on entering Leacock 232.

Over two hundred students overflowing from the room during Tuesday's visit, were treated to a closer look into the mind workings, lingual ideologies, and philosophies of education of one of Canada's foremost political figures. And a speech smattered with some moments of insight and others of tiresome conservative rhetoric was, to understate it greatly, well-received. Hardly surprising given that McGill continues to be one of the Quebec Liberal leader's electoral strongholds.

For a leader of two parties that have suffered humiliating defeats on the Canadian political scene, Charest has a surprising sense of humour when it comes to his past. Describing his respect for McGill, Charest cited a recent Gallup poll that ranked the school number one in Canada.

"But I want to warn you against polls! You should not use polls at all! Beware!" he joked, referring to his loss in last November's provincial despite a strong show in the popular vote in the weeks leading up to the election.

But what he made up for with laughter and telling the gathered hundreds what they wanted to hear, he lacked in straight answers and inspiration. In his speech, he tackled the joys of the politics of Quebec from the perspective of the Opposition leader. McGill's stake in Quebec, falling funding for education, and employment trends. And challenged by students' questions, he broke out the hardline party fallback platforms: Premier Lucien Bouchard's desperation, the value of bilingualism (though the secession debate was surprisingly little-mentioned), and the need for focus on current thorns in the side of the current PQ mandate - health and education.

When one student questioned the Liberal commitment to launching Quebec as a globally competitive industrial region, Charest spoke of the need for English education in schools. "We will be able, as a country and within Quebec, to deal with these issues a lot more effectively the day people understand and accept that if you speak more than one language, you have access to a bigger view of the world," he said to the applauding audience.

The event was also used by Charest to bring home his message that his educational policy was made with students in mind. He spoke about high profile issues in post-secondary education from the Millennium Fund and differential tuition, to the difficulty grads experience in finding jobs, and the need for private sector relations with universities.

It was a question on differential tuition that struck perhaps the biggest nerve. "I don't believe that differential tuition fees are right. They send the wrong message," Chares said. "I don't want to see a system that discriminates in the way it does now."

But in a meeting before the speech, Charest was also up front with McGill student leaders who have led the public and legal

fight against differential fees about the chances of winning their battle.

"I appreciated his honesty. [The problem with differential tuition] is not something that the Quebec electorate grabbed on to," said SSMU VP Community and Government Affairs Wojtek Baraniak.

Responding to a student questioning his platforms on graduate employment, Charest assured students of a Liberal party commitment to job creation. "The more a person has education, the more chances they have at holding a job and keeping a job," said. "One of the problems, I believe, is high taxes... I am a firm believer that if we reduce taxes we're going to get more jobs."

The Liberal leader was also quick to attack the PQ's record on funding to education. "What we've found on university campuses throughout Quebec is a picture that is not a nice one," he said, describing lost funding in the amounting to \$1.9 billion in recent years.

Charest gave a show of support for initiatives outlined in the administration's new "Tradition and Innovation" discussion paper, initiatives, which many have called too inviting to big business, research & development and an emphasis in the humanities on integrating technology.

"Our society will be a knowledge-based society, it will be global," he said. "There has to be, in a lot of respects, a stronger connections, a stronger partnership between teaching institutions and the private sector and government."

Baraniak said that while he saw certain merits to heightened relationships with local small business, the direction also made him wary. "I'm not sure if Canada is ready for an IBM wing of the Arts building," he said, adding that Charest's case for partnerships had elicited some debate among students.

Bringing home the speaking opportunity even further, the leader sang the praises of McGill and its place in the current provincial and educational infrastructures. "McGill University is the crown jewel for the city of Montreal. It's also a crown jewel for the province of Quebec," he said.

Finally, Charest showed his optimism that some of his commitments could soon be met, expressing a hope that broad scale

disenfranchisement with the status quo will propel the Liberals to victory in the next provincial election.

"I look forward most of all to returning to McGill so that we can - who knows, one day as Premier - announce our policies for education and how McGill will play a leading role."

Charest's visit also saw him spend time sitting down as well as taking tours with administrators and SSMU executives to discuss the topics of the day, in what Baraniak described as a very successful event, and the first of many such efforts this year to host major political figures.

SSMU joined the administration in a concerted effort to paint the visit as one by the leader of the opposition, and not the leader of the Liberal party, in an effort to not show any political partisanship in Quebec's high stakes political climate.

At an SSMU meeting last week, the Law Students Association's François Tanguay-Renaud questioned the visit and asked why there has been no word of visits by leaders on the other end of the spectrum.

"Those are the people controlling public finances," said Tanguay-Renaud. "We should also have a prominent member of government."

SSMU confirmed later that Finance Minister Bernard Landry is slated to make a visit in the coming weeks, and said that efforts would be made to also welcome other figures such as the premier.

But non-partisanship was hardly the word of the day, according to some students. The event saw SSMU execs dressed to the nines taking photo opportunity after photo opportunity with arms around Charest's shoulder. It saw Baraniak extend a marker to Charest to sign a CASA Education Builds a Nation campaign poster. Baraniak later introduced Charest as "a great statesman," while President Andrew Tischler later closed the event saying, "I know we have a strong voice for student concerns in the government," he said, then presenting Charest with an SSMU frosh jersey.

"I don't want people to see this as a partisan event," defended Baraniak. "Overall, I was really happy that so many McGill students showed up," he added, rating the event a big success.

CHAREST QUOTES

"Both levels of government are fighting over issues that aren't very relevant to the day-to-day lives of students" - Charest on Quebec's ongoing battle with the federal government over the Millennium Scholarship Fund

"McGill University is the crown jewel for the city of Montreal."

"What we've found on university campuses throughout Quebec is a picture that is not a nice one." - Charest on the current post-secondary funding crisis

"We don't focus enough on how a language or languages have been, for us, a source of freedom."

"I am a firm believer that if we reduce taxes, we're going to get more jobs."

"I'm a big believer in public-private partnerships."

"I was part of a government that made bad decisions... It was no wonder we wound up with two seats in 1993. No one forgot." - Charest on the federal PC defeat six years ago.

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SSMU Errors Inconvenience Students

Series of mistakes with opt-outs annoying and unprofessional, students complain

BY JON BRICKER AND JAIME KIRZNER-ROBERTS

A series of administrative errors on the part of SSMU have caused students much hassle in recent weeks. Plagued by technical problems and uninformed staff, SSMU has angered students by giving out false information and confusing students about procedures for several student fee opt-outs.

Last week, the McGill Student Fund (MSF) opt-out period, initially advertised to run from September 22 until October 5, was cut short by an entire week. But a public outcry over the seemingly devious tactics led SSMU to back down, allowing the opt-out period to run until the 5 as originally advertised.

"We recognized the miscommunication and we decided to extend the period to October 5," said SSMU President Andrew Tischler, explaining that the initial advertising was printed in error.

But for Mike Leitold, organizer for NAMBY-PAMBY, a student group which organized against the controversial MSF last spring, even if the error was administrative, SSMU was definitely trying to discourage students from opting out of the

fund.

"Any student who is trying to opt-out either can't afford it or has ethical reasons," he said.

"I don't think they were expecting the number of students they got wanting to opt out...At one point students were just told to go home," Leitold added.

There was also confusion last week about whether or not a student who opted out of the MSF was still eligible to benefit from the fund's bursary allowance. Several students were told that if they opted out, they would not be able to apply for these bursaries, even after a decision by the council last week to not restrict eligibility.

"I couldn't get a straight answer. I was finally told that by opting out, I was making myself ineligible for bursaries. But I was opting out in the first place because money's tight," said one student who visited the SSMU desk on Monday.

"We recognize that information went out that might be confusing. It is not our intention or desire to mislead students at McGill," said Tischler. "People who opt out

are eligible. But they must recognize also that their chances of getting a bursary are reduced with the more people that opt out of MSF."

VP Operations Kevin McPhee also assumed responsibility for his share of the confusion over other available opt-outs. Front desk staff informed inquiring students that they could also opt out of their McGill Daily and CKUT fees, although neither are opt-outable.

At least two campus publications subsequently published the false information. John Braithwaite, Music and Programming Department Coordinator at CKUT was annoyed, and said that "The SSMU provided erroneous information to the press. The SSMU should instead be supporting these campus groups."

Students trying to take advantage of a new Internet opt-out for the student health plan also met with a number of problems.

"These have just been careless mistakes," said McPhee. "Everything has been corrected." Except maybe the image of the SSMU.

New ATM Contract Brings Ethical Dilemma

Will the new deal ultimately benefit students?

BY CHRIS NEEDLES

The recent renewal of McGill's six-year-old ATM contract with Royal Bank has students wondering once again whether the deal was made in their best interests.

"Students are the clientele of tomorrow, the best clientele we could ever get," said Parsy des Champs, Senior Account Manager with Royal Bank. She added that the reason Royal Bank wanted to keep the machines on campus was because it wants to gain student clientele, stating that University students were of particular value to the bank.

McGill's administration echoed the merits of the deal. Wanda Leah Trineer, McGill's Senior Treasury Officer and liaison with Royal, said that Royal is the school's principal banker. "They're mainly to provide service," she explained, noting that McGill made very little money on the deal - only a few thousand dollars based solely on transaction volume. She pointed out that the deal is not exclusive and that nothing is legally stopping any other bank from being on campus.

But some students say that the banks' place on campuses have to be rethought, especially giants like Royal Bank. "Banks are probably the worst organizations possible. They're there to make money," said Morgan Stewart, student society Chair at University of Victoria's where there exists a similar deal with Royal Bank.

"Royal Bank, is not keeping money in our communities and their recent merger application makes that clear," Stewart said.

While he says that it is unrealistic to expect that there would be no bank machines on campus, Mike Leitold, a member of QPIRG's CorpWatch working group, questions the decisions being made. He suggested that John Cleghorn's roles as both Royal Bank's Chairman and member of McGill's Board of Governors as a conflict of interest that does not serve students.

"I have to ask if my interests are being put to the floor. To what degree are decisions being made for students and to what degree are they being made for corporations?" he asked.

But Des Champs saw Royal's efforts to put ATMs on campus as part of the same broader effort to help students, an effort that she says also includes low-fee student programs that she calls a loss leader.

"Six years ago ATMs on campus were very rare," said Trineer. "The renewal of this agreement allows them to remain."

But Stewart wonders just how positive a trend this is if students are losing out. He was surprised, he said, that the student union here isn't speaking up. "These deals are OK if students get things in return."

"This is just an advertising opportunity for the bank," he said.

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EDITORIAL

Daily Vision for the SSMU

BY JAMES YAP

An important part of the Daily's mandate is to continually criticize and evaluate the SSMU throughout the course of the year. However, we feel it is unfair to offer criticism of the SSMU's actions without offering our own suggestions. Therefore the Daily presents the following proposal which outlines the primary goals we believe the SSMU ought to seek to accomplish this year. These are

objectives the pursuit of which, we feel, best represent the interests of the McGill student community. Our evaluations of the SSMU's performance throughout the year will be partially influenced by these objectives.

1. Make the SSMU more democratic and accessible to students. Many concerns have been raised recently as to the openness of the SSMU process. For example, many feel that SSMU council meetings, though technically open to all students, are held in an exclusive and hostile atmosphere for non-council members. After one of these meetings last year, McGill Science student Pauline Hwang told the Daily that "concerned students were personally attacked and denied the right of defending [them]selves." Freedom of the press has also come under attack; The Red Herring, The McGill Tribune, and the Daily have all engaged in hostilities with the SSMU within the past two years. In addition, the recent controversy over proposed appointments to the Senate and the general lack of awareness of SSMU activities among McGill students cast a negative light on the Students' Society. The SSMU should work to facilitate, if not encourage, student participation in the democratic process.

2. Provide effective leadership in organizing students' interest movements. Students, and young people in general, are an underrepresented voice in the social and political communities. To ensure that students' interests are not neglected, it is important that they

endeavour to make their voices heard. As it is today, students look largely to QPIRG and other student activist groups instead of the SSMU to organize protests whenever such a need arises. The SSMU cannot properly fulfill its mandate of representing McGill students without taking a larger role in student activism.

3. Maintain the present effort in the fight against differential tuition fees. Although it fits in the category above, this is an issue which we feel deserves special attention, as it places McGill in a unique position. Certain aspects of differential tuition fees make little sense unless viewed as discriminatory measures against anglophones. As such, it falls to McGill, as the foremost English-language university in the province, to take a prominent role in fighting them. The SSMU, as the official representative of the students of McGill, is in the best position to organize an effective resistance and to lobby both the provincial and federal governments regarding this issue.

4. Arrange for high-profile speakers to come to McGill. An important part of a balanced university education is good availability to educational resources. "Educational resources" does not exclusively mean a lot of books; it includes the minds of other people. No one goes into university and comes out having learned more from his or her textbooks than from colleagues, professors, speakers, etc. The SSMU should make an effort to attract prominent and intelligent speakers, something that would benefit all students.

HYDE PARK

A Little Cruise

BY AMIR BAR-DOR

In the 1940s, as war ravaged Europe and North Africa, a small boat carrying several hundred Jews pulled into the port of then-British colony Palestine. The Jews, tired and dirty, made a daring escape from the inferno that surrounded them and were seeking security in the British colony. The British, not overly eager to disturb the Jewish-Arab balance and bring upon an Arab revolt, turned the Jews back. After all, there were a certain number of Jews allowed in the colony and a certain number of Arabs. Letting these migrants in would set a horrible precedent. With nowhere to go, the Jews headed back to Europe and all too predictable fates. Shame on the British! Where was their compassion?

Compassion. Surely we have learned better. Surely, if I had to decide, I would have bent the rules and somehow let these unfortunate people remain... Before I preach to myself how GOOD I am, let me fast-forward to 1999...

I was talking to a friend of mine the other night and the topic of the recently arrived ILLEGAL Chinese migrants came up. I'm not, by any stretch of the imagination, a supporter of Preston and his gang of Western Cowboys, I'm too ethnic for that, but my opinion on the matter was the following: Process the migrants, follow the proper procedure and if the government determines that they should be deported, so be it.

Back to my friend...

Upset by an anti-migrant rally she had seen on television, she began:

"Can you believe those people? We live in such a rich country, a country with so much space, such a blessed country and they're shouting and yelling about a couple of hundred migrants. These people came over in rickety boats risking their lives not to be criminals, not to rape and kill. These human beings, they are humans and not only migrants, escaped a horrible life, escaped a persecuting government to build a new life. These people arrived to give their children, their future generations, hope and freedom. Can you believe there are people who, after all these people endured, would coldly put them on a plane, fly them to Beijing, throw them off the plane and say 'Would we love to keep you guys but it would set a horrible precedent?'"

I felt like crap. I am such a hypocrite. Compassion, yup it's a beautiful, romantic word and we all believe in it. We all believe in it as long as it's little Timmy O'Toole stuck in a well. If its drab-looking, tired foreigners trudging off a boat, lets not fight too hard in the name of compassion because it might end up costing us a couple of dollars. Hey, it's not as if refugees amount to anything, oh, let's say like: Governor General

THE MCGILL DAILY

editorial offices:

5180 McTavish St., Montreal QC, Room B-03, H3A 1X9
phone: 514-398-6781, fax: 514-398-8318

business and advertising office:

5180 McTavish St., Montreal QC, Room B-07, H3A 1X9
phone: 514-398-6790, fax: 514-398-8318

co-ordinating editor:

JASON GORE

co-ordinating news editor:

BEN ECKETT

co-ordinating culture editor:

JULIA DILLIT

news editors:

JAN BRICKER, JANE KIRZNER-ROBERTS

culture editors:

GARET FURBER, YVES FRIEDMAN

features editor:

TIL PINCHENSKI

layout and design editor:

JAMES YAP

photo editor:

CELINE HEINRICH

office manager:

MARK EATON

contributors:

DAN BERSAK, JONAH GINDIN, JOHN OSTVED, DAVID PORGORSKI, SIMON RABINOVITCH, ARON WASSERMAN, SALLY WARNER, MARGARITA CLARENS, AMIR BAR-DOR, PIERRE-ALAIN PARFOND, TERRA, OIBIS NEEDLES

défil français:

JULIEN LAFLANTE

business manager:

MARVIN SCHRIER

assistant business manager:

PIERRE GOWLEY

advertising management:

SARAH DUCHENE, BORIS SHELOV

advertising layout and design:

CAMERON CAMPBELL

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THE COMPENDIUM

Really, really dumb stuff

Its arrival is announced days in advance in The Globe and Mail. "Really, Really Neat Stuff," proclaims the Hedonics catalogue that came in Saturday's paper, though this designation seems a tad subjective. Yes, this Sharper Image wannabe features products that you just can't find anywhere else, some for good reason. A survey of some of the more dubious offerings:

****The SockLight** - because getting

your socks without turning on the lamp is one of those yuppie luxuries you just can't live without. \$29.99

****Inchmaster Waistband Stretcher** - This makes "your clothes fit better," as if it was their fault that they no longer fit. Oh wait, it's quality-made in Germany! For sure, it's worth \$49.99

****Star Trek Communicator** - "You're on a five minute mission to boldly go to the convenience store. But what did she say she needed? You flip open your comm set. Hit playback. Her voice, "Milk, bread,

ice cream." They forgot to warn potential buyers that the coolness of this device may make them irresistible to the opposite sex. \$34.99

****Waterless Pet Bath** - Who needs water when you've got "Zyonic Technology?" Yes, a hundred trillion super-oxygenated molecules are fired at your beloved pet, all from the power of one nine volt battery. \$69.99

****Sleep Buddy** - Apparently, the culprit behind insomnia and backpain is sleeping without a large piece of foam

wedged between your legs. Now you can get this foam for only \$24.99!

****Personal Ionizer** - Everyone will instantly recognize you as a health conscious individual when you walk into the room with this small, black box hanging around your neck. They will envy you when you explain how it filters the air you breathe and it only cost you \$59.99

The Compendium is a listing of unusual items compiled bi-weekly by Daily staff.

An Interview with

McGill professor emerges from the trenches

BY TAL PINCHEVSKY

Irwin Cotler is as humble as he is dignified.

A professor of law at McGill University, the Director of its Human Rights Program and Chair of InterAmicus (the McGill-based Human Rights Advocacy Center), Cotler has had an amazingly accomplished career, primarily as a fighter for numerous humanitarian causes. As a consultant to various government departments, Cotler initially served from 1968-72 as Special Advisor to former Minister of Justice and Attorney General John Turner, focusing primarily on human rights, law reform, and the rights of the poor. Cotler has also served as international counsel to former political prisoners in the Soviet Union (Andrei Sakharov), South Africa (Nelson Mandela), Latin America (Jacobo Timmerman), and Asia (Muchtar Pakpahan). After years of humanitarian initiatives regarding the exploitation of groups around the world, Professor Cotler recently declared himself a candidate for the Liberal nomination in the Mount Royal riding in the next federal election. Despite numerous achievements, he maintains an overtly casual appearance from his unkempt hair to his worn shoes. Professor Cotler recently shared his valuable time with the McGill Daily, with whom he was formerly editor-in-chief.

LIFE AS AN EDITOR

Daily: Tell me about your time at the Daily.

Cotler: It was one of the great periods of my student life. I was editor-in-chief from 1962 to 1963. I was then a second-year student in law, and we had a kind of collective.... I think the best part of it was a real

esprit, we not only worked on the Daily, we also played football together in the old student union and just had a great camaraderie. I think it was one of the periods where working on a newspaper was a growing experience on a personal level. I look back on it as one of the best periods I had at McGill.

Daily: Did your time at the Daily con-

tribute to your social and humanitarian activism? page editorials with respect to supporting the struggle for black civil rights and writing against Apartheid. So I think, at the time, we were what would be called the small liberal civil-libertarian movement. Arms control, disarmament, human rights, anti-Apartheid, etc.

Daily: You've concentrated a great deal on the Canadian Charter of Rights and

“ As for being involved on behalf of political prisoners, these are not just individuals who are imprisoned, it is an attempt to imprison the cause for which they stand. ”

tributed to your social and humanitarian activism?

Cotler: I think I was in a period which was the beginning of the sixties, but not the sixties as it came to be. I was in what might be called the civil rights part of the sixties. The McGill Combined Student's campaign against nuclear disarmament was one of the major political voices at that time and I served as its chair. I was very much involved in civil liberties issues as they were at the time, not as they eventually became. So I guess you could probably characterize me as a leftist "small liberal" at that time. We were still just coming out of the Ozzie and Harriet generation and it was between that and the counterculture of the sixties. I think we were a pretty civil-libertarian group, we took the occasion to write front-

page editorials with respect to supporting the struggle for black civil rights and writing against Apartheid. So I think, at the time, we were what would be called the small liberal civil-libertarian movement. Arms control, disarmament, human rights, anti-Apartheid, etc.

Daily: You've concentrated a great deal on the Canadian Charter of Rights and freedoms over the course of your career, are people more tolerant of each other today than when you first started?

Cotler: I would like to think that people are more tolerant and that they would see the charter as being a rights-based protection system for human rights as a whole and for the specific vulnerable groups of society, be it the rights of women, children, immigrants or visible minorities. So I see the charter as being that kind of protection system which helps to define us as a people and as people.

Now I am mindful of the fact that there are a number of criticisms of the charter. Namely the anti-majoritarian paradox, as it is called, where the courts exert the power of the elected legislatures and that the charter has resulted in the coddling of criminals. That is that the rights of the accused are given much more weight than they should. That it is tribalising society and that we are eroding the communitarian ethos. There are some who have stated from an Independentist perspective that the charter means that the issues always lean on the side of the government. Others say that the charter has resulted in Quebec getting more recognition as a distinct society than it should. There are these critiques, but I think that when you get down to it, it is fair to say that the charter has affected a revolution in human rights in this country where we move from the sovereignty of parliament to the sovereignty of the constitution.

To sum it all up, I think if you look at the constitutional history of this country, for the first 115 years, it was preoccupied with the division of power between federal and provincial powers. Since the advent of the charter, we are talking about limitations on the exercise of power, so we have moved from a powers process to a rights process.

ACTIVISM

Daily: What compels you to represent underdogs (i.e. political prisoners, visible minorities)?

Cotler: My first two "justice" role models were my parents. And my father always took very seriously the biblical injunction of justice — justice shall ye pursue — and my mother lived that way. Our home was always open to groups and people from all walks of life. The notion that my father used to always quote from Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes was "a person that has not shared the actions and passions of his times is deemed not to have lived" and this

also means getting involved on behalf of the nonrepresented.

As for being involved on behalf of political prisoners, these are not just individuals who are imprisoned, it is an attempt to imprison the cause for which they stand. So if a Sakharov is imprisoned in the former Soviet Union it is because the Soviet Union wanted to imprison democracy, if a Mandela is imprisoned in South Africa it is because the Apartheid government wanted to imprison the anti-Apartheid movement, if a Timmerman is imprisoned in Argentina it is because the junta wanted to imprison those who spoke on behalf of the disappeared, and so on.

So really, my involvement with political figures is also an association to that involvement with the larger cause of human rights that they were espousing.

Daily: Why are you referred to by Maclean's Magazine as a "Counsel of the Oppressed" entering the political arena?

Cotler: It's a question that I had to ask myself and try to answer and the only answer was that I was not switching course. I was only going to seek to intensify and amplify the advocacy of those causes with which I've had the privilege of being associated. I have always had a respect for Parliament as being the representative institution for the people in this country. That will help to give expression to the case and cause. I might find out when I'm there that I was mistaken, but this was really the point being pressed on me by those who were asking me to run and this is very much a grass roots movement. I was responding to the constituents and the constituencies in the Mount Royal riding. These causes with which I have been involved in the trenches these past thirty

The Legacy of the Women

Women artists from early-20th century Montreal receive

BY Yael Friedman

In the years preceding the First World War, Montreal stood firmly as Canada's main commercial and cultural center. Within its famous Square Mile area just west of McGill campus lived some of Canada's most prominent and influential citizens. All of them English and predominantly Protestant, these individuals controlled seventy percent of the country's wealth. From this cosmopolitan atmosphere of a culturally rich city and privileged background, emerged a group of women that would make significant changes to the Canadian art scene and yet who only seem to be receiving their due recognition now, more than fifty years later.

The works of these women, who are generally referred to collectively as the Beaver Hall Group (since they all had studios on Beaver Hall Street), have recently been acquired from private collections and organized into a retrospective exhibition at the Walter Klinkhoff Gallery (located on Stanley and Sherbrooke).

On the same day as the opening of the exhibit the gallery also helped launch the new book by Barbara Meadowcraft about the Beaver Hall Women, entitled *Painting Friends*.

Through the exhibit and book, the gallery, the patrons of the show and Meadowcraft have begun to impress upon the minds of Montrealers and Canadians the distinguished importance of this special group of women.

The Beaver Hall women met while studying art at the Art Association of Montreal. In the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth, women of the middle and upper classes were encouraged to develop their talents and pursue intellectual interests. Yet Meadowcraft spoke of the paradox that existed at the time in which "the daughters of the bourgeoisie (were) encouraged to develop their talent but 'heaven help them' if they thought they would do it professionally." However, by the 1920s, this rigid attitude towards women had been tempered and the women did not



Queen Mary and Cote des Neiges Road, by Kathleen Morris

have to confront quite as much opposition.

Their teacher, William Baymmer, a well-established artist in his own right, encouraged his pupils, both male and female, to train as professionals and even suggested to those who could afford it, to

go study abroad, particularly in Paris.

Of course, these women faced more challenges than their male counterparts. They did not possess the same power within art institutions as men or in the 'boys' clubs' where many contemporary artists

exhibited. The Arts Club, a strictly male establishment located on McGill College Ave., sometimes invited female artists to exhibit. Yet until the nineteen sixties they invited no women as patrons. Because of this exclusion from saloons and clubs, women who wished to congregate and appreciate each other's art and company had to do so at tea parties.

This may lead one to infer that in comparison to male artists, women supported each other more and never vied for superior positions. There was however, a healthy element of competition that drove the artists to individualize themselves and develop their own ideas and personal styles.

In 1929 the National Gallery of Canada organized a contest sponsored by the Governor General, Lord Willingdon; its aim was to promote public interest in the arts. In its first year, Prudence Heward, a Beaver Hall woman, claimed first prize and two other Beaver Hall women received honorable mentions. In a letter to the director of the National Gallery, Kathleen Morris wrote

th Irwin Cotler

nches of activism with a new mission

years are causes that still deserve to be in the trenches and they also deserve to have a voice in Parliament. I am not saying that this voice is not there in Parliament, I'm not saying that I'll be the only voice. I'm just saying that I am hoping to join that type of voice and vision in Parliament.

Daily: How does your career as an activist translate to a possible parliamentary role for you in the future?

Cotler: I don't know about the future. I can only say that I sought to articulate the causes for which I stand like the notion of women's rights as human rights, the notion that children must have first call in our resources, etc. These are not just the causes for which I stand but they are the

Daily: How has life changed for you since you have been on the cover of the *Globe and Mail*?

Cotler: It has changed only in the sense that I had a full life before I decided to do this (run for office) and it has made that life a little more crowded and intense. It just means I have to get up a little bit earlier and go to bed a little bit later. I have to organize my life so that I can keep the priorities in perspective, see that the family gets first call, that the human rights causes with which I have been associated don't get neglected, and that my law teaching, which I am intending to continue, can be fulfilled responsibly. I have not yet been elected nor have I gone to Parliament so I

rally be made upon me as a part of the Parliamentary process.

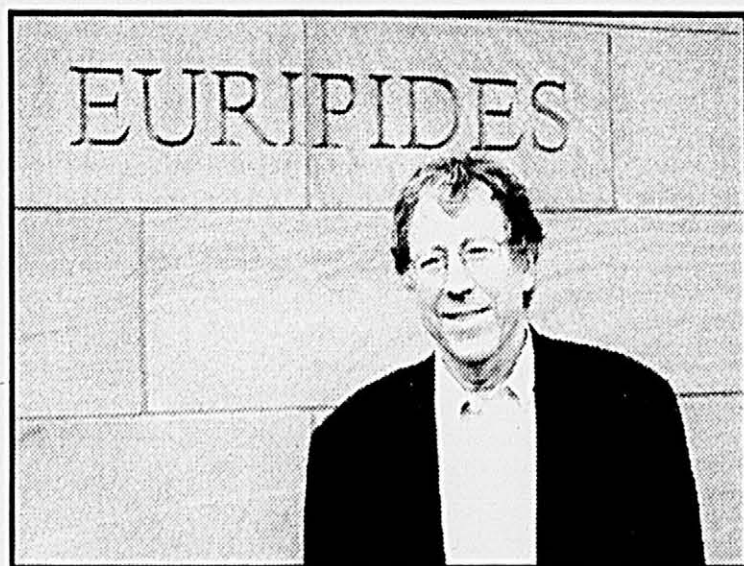
ACHIEVEMENTS

Daily: You have achieved a great deal as a professor, an activist, and a lawyer, but what do you consider among your crowning achievements?

Cotler: I don't have what I would call crowning achievements. I can recall certain inspirational moments and I'd like to identify four of them, if I may.

The first had to do with the establishment of the Pointe Sainte Charles Legal Clinic in Verdun, which was the precursor for a network of neighbourhood legal services across this country. It is something that we take for granted today, but it is something that I think was at the forefront at the time of the movement, which was then called the Poverty Law Movement, to address the growing imbalance between rich and poor. By the way, that is still an issue, but if you are asking for a significant moment that I had an opportunity to participate in, that would be the first.

The second I think would have to be what I call "the Year of the Constitution," when hundreds of citizen groups and non-governmental organizations trotted up to Parliament Hill. This included aboriginal people, women, visible minorities, the disabled, and the like made representations to the Joint House Senate Committee on the constitution at the time and transformed the nature of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms that we now have. That charter was very different when it was first proposed by the government and I think that the groups that went up there, through their advocacy, transformed the nature of



Irwin Cotler, counsel for the oppressed

the charter as it became the rights-based instrument that we now see.

The third was seeing the liberation of Anatoli Sharansky after eight and a half years in prison and seeing that as the precursor for what would then become. That is, if I can use a Marxist metaphor, the withering away of the Soviet Union, and really seeing it as an outgrowth of those courageous individuals, like Sakharov and Sharansky, who formed the Helsinki monitor groups of the time. Those who monitored Soviet compliance with the Helsinki Final Act and its international human rights obligation.

Finally, I would have to say, because it was such a moving moment that, even now, it is embedded in my mind's eye and my psyche forever, Nelson Mandela leaving a South African prison where he had been imprisoned for 27 years, having nurtured the dream, then presiding over the dismantling of Apartheid and, as President of South Africa, leading South Africa into a post-Apartheid, post-racist, democratic, pluralistic

South Africa. I am not saying these are all panaceas, these are not formulas for instant success, but I think what that signified to the world was the notion that one person can make a difference. I remember Sharansky's words when he came out of prison, I've never forgotten it as a kind of motto for human rights as a whole. He said "if we stay the course, stay in the trenches day in and day out, then ultimately those who struggle for human rights will prevail over those who seek to repress human rights." One of the interesting things I found was that wherever I went, even with a different language, that the theme was always the same. That is the theme that we are each, wherever we are, the guarantors of each other's destiny. That was something that was a common refrain from any group of political prisoners or oppressed groups with whom I have been involved anywhere on the globe. You know, when you get right down to it, that is really what human rights is about, whether you are in Quebec or Canada or speaking internationally.

“ These causes with which I have been involved in the trenches these past thirty years are causes that still deserve to be in the trenches and they also deserve to have a voice in Parliament. ”

causes on which I will take a stand. I intend to articulate those concerns and aspirations to the best of my ability when I am there knowing that when I do speak, I speak with the backing of this multicultural mosaic, which includes people who have in fact been espousing these very causes. So I basically would be acting as their voice and the voice of the riding and its multiple expressions in parliament.

have to look in terms of what will happen if I do. Right now I am still a candidate, a candidate for the Liberal Party nomination. Legally speaking, that is not closed and then, after that, there is an election and if I win the election, then it will be a matter of identifying and organizing priorities and purposes so that I can deal responsibly with those things I wish to espouse and those demands that will natu-

of Beaver Hall

recognition in exhibit and book

"I was simply delighted over Prue winning the Wilington Prize and think she thoroughly deserves it... naturally I wish that Sarah and I were among them too."

The works on display at the Klinkhoff Gallery range from commissioned portraits to city scapes of Montreal, to country scenes. In these subject matters the artists find their common ground. As opposed to the Group of Seven, to whom they are often compared, the Beaver Hall Group's motifs are not centered so much on the wilds of northern Canada, or the unexplored west, but on the urban setting in which they lived, and the people whom they knew.

Kathleen Morris, perhaps the best known from the group, often painted well-known streets in both Montreal and Ottawa. Her works have a nostalgic appeal that seems to speak to many people who have grown up in the city. This may be the reason why she has garnered such widespread support and acclaim.

Not all of the women had the luxury of being able to choose the subjects for their

paintings. Especially during the years of the depression, some had to contend with the fact that they needed to create art purely for an income.

One of the group, Lilius Torrence Newton, had to reconcile her art with finance. In 1929, her husband, a stockbroker, lost all of his money. After going through periods of deep depression and alcoholism, he left his family. Torrence Newton realized that she now had to paint for commission and so she began doing portraits all across the country for Canadian high society. At one point she even went to England and painted the portraits of the Queen and Prince Philip. Several of the portraits appear at the exhibit, but like many artists who paint for a patron, these are not her best works.

Torrence Newton was actually the only one from the group to have been married at all. The others for a multitude of possible reasons, did not. It may have been their independence they cherished, for according to Meadowcroft "In the 1920's when they

were beginning their careers it was very difficult for a woman to be a professional and a mother and wife. One had to choose... particularly true for the depression, many would not employ married women."

It may also have been because of the lack of available single men. A whole generation of Canadian men was lost to the Great War, in the name of the British Empire. Whatever the reason, they remained single and for the most part, continued painting throughout their lives.

Although highly prolific and incredibly talented, this exhibit at the Klinkhoff Gallery is only the second ever to showcase their work. According to Meadowcroft, nothing thus far (preceding the Klinkhoff exhibition) "has even begun to do justice to these painters." Art History, as a discipline, is notorious for its exclusion of women and minorities whose work does not fit into the accepted model of what an artistic 'genius' is. Only in the last thirty years have female artists been regarded and analyzed with the same respect as men. Feminist theory has only entered its

discourse within the last few years.

For this reason and for the pure sake of the high quality of the collection itself, this exhibit is essential for understanding Canadian Art. It also captures a whole time period in Montreal history, when the city was at its peak.

When the exhibit first opened, the *Montreal Gazette*, for reasons of their own, placed its coverage of the show in its Woman's section. In the past, every review of shows in the Klinkhoff Gallery have made the front page of the Art section. Yet again, these unrecognized artists had been relegated to the back pages and did not receive their deserved recognition.

Along with her book that serves as the unofficial catalogue for the exhibit, Meadowcroft has done a series of lectures discussing these women, their social context in Montreal and the value of their work.

Barbara Meadowcroft grew up in a



Meadowcroft

Montreal very similar to that of the subjects of her book. They came from similar backgrounds, which made it easier for her to gain access to their histories, both factually and in understanding the world they came from. It was her research that spurred the Klinkhoff Gallery to organize the show and her vast knowledge and resources which made the exhibit and the women it present, more than just the two-dimensional paintings hanging on the gallery walls.

The exhibit of the Beaver Hall women continues until this Saturday, October 2nd at the Walter Klinkhoff Gallery on Sherbrooke and Stanley. Admission is free.

Barbara Meadowcroft's book - Painting Friends - is available for purchase at the gallery and at the Double Hook bookstore on Greene St. in Westmount.

Reappropriating Material Culture

An exhibit examines and displays the role of the media and the material

By TERRA RANTEN

OBERO, an artistic center at 4001 Berri street is currently exhibiting *Bricoler l'incurable. Détails 1999*, a new exhibition by Mohamed El baz, is definitely creative yet also un-intimidating to an art-exhibition-viewing rookie.

El baz, a contemporary artist born in Morocco and now residing in France, is young and serious but also approachable as he describes his work, its meaning for him, and its importance. His work stems from a western media and consumer culture and is punctuated by common objects

Text by Mohamed El baz, translated to english from the french:

99-09-05. New York

Citizens, numbed by twenty years of neoliberal propaganda, are conditioned to expect science and technique to provide a solution to the great political problems of our societies, while politicians are content with "managing".

99-04-24. London

It is too dangerous for the system to think that people whom life has treated like shit are not condemned to eternally wade in it. I was completely animalised, I had developed an impressive sense of smell, I could smell the polish of shoes, I recognized the tobacco smoked by guards, I managed without help of religion or any sort of therapy. I beat the system.

99-04-01. Paris

Who owns the image of a foot entering or exiting a Nike shoe: to the trademark or the person photographed.

re-appropriated to offer new meaning, and

raise awareness or interest. This all may sound quite complex but truly it's rather simple and thought provoking.

Making my way around the room, I was first confronted with three texts taken from three different newspapers, written in large bold type on three walls at the entrance. The texts came from newspapers from New York, London and Paris and are all current.

Although it seems that the texts aim to criticize our media-driven, consumer culture, they actually serve to highlight the media's role in society, according to El baz. He intended to recognize the media's role as an informer, as a tool to raise questions,

later. It conjured up an interesting idea of future, and time. Beside the clocks, there was a wall and the words: "Rendre la honte plus

room were "Mystery Skull", "Jour de feu", "Arts & Leisure", "War, What War?", "Smile!", "Your Business", "Classified",

play them, re-appropriate them." He said the boxes inhibited space, a lot of space, and yet were empty. I asked about the labels' significance and he said they just collected boxes and filled the space. He then discussed the continuity of time and how interesting an object a fan is.

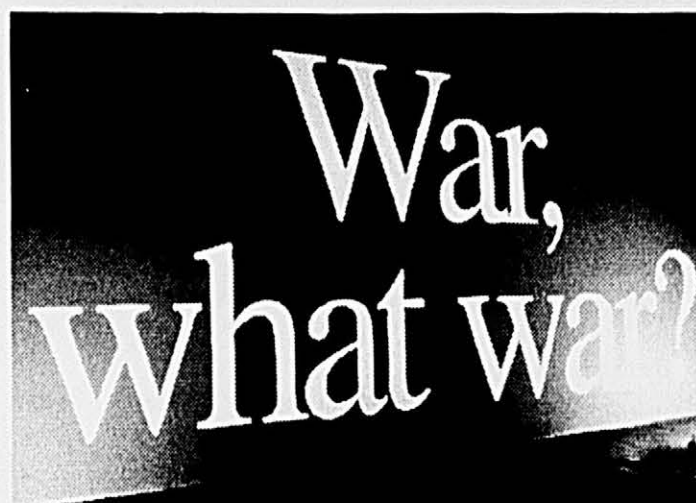
"The fan is an object which searches as it rotates, it looks around the room and pushes out air as it simultaneously draws one towards it," he said. "A simple object yet one of interesting contradictions." I asked if he was criticizing the media and he quickly responded that he was not. Rather, he was appreciating it, displaying it, and demonstrating what it provides for us.

I asked how a spectator should approach his work and what they should gain from it. He told me that each person sees his work differently and that they take something from it that is unique to them. A little confusing perhaps, but also satisfyingly unusual.

The exhibit was a creative representation by an artist. An expression of ideas that are there to be gazed upon and provide insight. They offer both a means of looking at our culture and provides a channel for personal introspection.

Mohamed El baz' Bricoler l'incurable will be showing until October 17 at 4001 Berri St. You can contact the OBERO artistic center at (514) 844-3250.

Obero@obero.net. www.obero.net



Pierre-Alain Parfard

honteuse encore" (To make shame even more shameful). In front of these words were three large rotating fans. It being a hot day, I leaned closer to the fans and took a longer look at the text. The words instantly brought to mind images of the Clinton affair and I thought about how the media really does make a shameful thing more shameful by printing it over and over for all of society to scrutinize. I then thought, the fans were maybe there to cool off the shame.

The remainder of the room was empty except for words and captions that all came from newspaper section headings. They were written in fluorescent color and a black light set in front of them made them glow brightly and urgently. The words about the

and "Monde". It seems cool but I'm at a loss for an interpretation.

El baz explained that he "likes to take common objects and things we see every



Pierre-Alain Parfard

day, such as newspaper headings, and dis-

Trade Policy Accused Of Doing More Harm Than Good *Is Canada complicit in the genocide in East Timor?*

By JAIME KIRZNER-ROBERTS AND MARGARITA CLARENS

Many concerned Canadians have continued to question Canada's role in the ever escalating conflict in Indonesia.

"The Canadian government has supported the Indonesian government militarily and diplomatically throughout the occupation of East Timor with little regard for human rights," argued Eric Abitbol, director of the Cantilevers Working Group on East Timor, operating at QPIRG-McGill. "To continue supporting and facilitating trade with Indonesia in the context of continued repression is irresponsible," he said.

Indonesia is one of the largest Canadian investment destinations in South East Asia, with over 100 Canadian-based companies active in the area. These companies deal in everything from ammunition and helicopters to fast food and financial services. Moreover, arms made in Canada have been finding their way to Indonesia over the past 25 years. In 1985, Quebec's own Pratt & Whitney signed a long-term agreement with Indonesia for the production of 100 Bell 412 helicopters valued at \$10 million. Minister of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Lloyd Axworthy and his Ministry okayed 10 export permits for navigation systems, helicopter and aircraft parts and electron-

ic equipment to Indonesia between 1996 and 1998. Foreign affairs classifies these exports as "non-offensive." But the Canadian government defends

regulations seriously." McGill Political Science Professor Rex Brynen disagrees with the government stance and believes that its foreign policy

been put on hold. Companies can not apply for permits at this time until the situation in Indonesia changes.... Canada has very strict military export policies. If we feel that a civil population is at risk then a permit won't be issued."

But others such as Abitbol think that there should be a total trade embargo against Indonesia, not only for military items. "There should be a temporary boycott of all goods from Indonesia," he said. "This would be effective in re-inforcing the link between trade and human rights."

Kerry Pither, spokesperson for the East Timor Alert Network (ETAN), agrees. "We are pleased that Canada plans to send military personnel, but the atrocities continue now, and we need to do all we can to stop these atrocities now," she said. "That's why we are asking Canada to announce a full and official military embargo on Indonesia, and the suspension of all bilateral economic aid... Trade and investment must also be frozen - Indonesian authorities simply must be told that genocide is not acceptable," she added.

"To continue supporting and facilitating trade with Indonesia is in the context of continued repression is irresponsible."

their trading relationship with Indonesia. "Trade and human rights are complementary goals," said Sean Rowan, Spokesperson for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. "Trade increases living standards, creates a middle class, and encourages a respect for law. We've consistently expressed concern over Indonesia's human rights record. By signing on to multilateral trade agreements, countries are taking responsibility. They have to take labour laws, human rights codes, and environmental

is too heavily influenced by the business interests.

"To be frank, I think the argument that trade promotes reform is rather self-serving and backed by remarkably little evidence. What trade actually promotes in Indonesia is Canadian wheat exports and mining investments - these are the sorts of interests that largely underpin our current policy," he said.

"Obviously it is our job to protect Canadian jobs and prosperity," conceded Rowan. "[But] all military exports have

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Weak Plot, Beautiful Landscapes

A Review of Xiu Xiu - The Sent Down Girl

BY JONAH GINDIN

During the height of the Chinese Cultural Youth Revolution (C.1967-76) approximately 8 million Chinese youths were "sent down" to the remotest parts of the country to receive specialized training for one year. Those youth whose families had money and connections were not obligated to go. Many of the youth "sent down" remained in these outlying regions, building new lives and fading from the memories of their friends and family; however, some of these youth were forced to stay in 'regional camps' for extended periods, often with disturbing consequences.

The story of Wen Xiu (nicknamed Xiu Xiu) is loosely narrated by a friend from her hometown of Chengdu. This character appears for five minutes at the beginning of the film and is otherwise only seen during two random, brief nostalgic interludes. His narrative equally brief and is totally forgotten until it jarringly reappears during the final throes of the film.

Xiu Xiu acquires such an impressive record at the regional camp that she is sent to train with a hermetic horse herder, Lao

Jin, in order to become familiar with cavalry. As her new life with Lao Jin progresses, it becomes clear that she will never be sent



for to return to Chengdu. Though she knows this on a subconscious level, she cannot admit it and begins a horrible transformation. From the sweet, virgin girl introduced to Lao Jin one year earlier grows a desperate, twisted woman who treats the tender Lao Jin like garbage and

sleeps with anyone who promises to send her home. Though Lao Jin obviously loves Wen Xiu, it is in vain because his genitalia was hacked off during a Tibetan tribal war. This too easily glosses over the potential sexual confrontation between Xiu Xiu and Lao Jin by limiting his capacity for love to that of a noble father.

Though built upon a disturbingly powerful premise of sexual abuse and spiritual redemption, and set in a pivotal point in Chinese history, the plot is mediocre at best. It rushes through the first moments where the family and friends of Xiu Xiu are introduced. However it is entirely too brief. Before you can say "Mao Tse-Tung" Xiu Xiu is plopped down in the middle of Tibetan nowhere. She begins her new life in the youth camp and is almost immediately moved to the herding encampment of Lao Jin. Now we can relax, take a breath, look around and absorb something of our surroundings... Here, the movie drastically changes pace, dragging the viewer repetitiously through Xiu Xiu's obvious personal conflict. Through this period Xiu Xiu's shallow relationship with Lao Jin is devel-

oped so that in the climactic ending he can redeem her tarnished soul by a sacrifice only possible through love and nobility and excellent cinematography.

Beautiful landscapes stretch out to the



horizon behind the perverse drama unfolding in Lao Jin's monastic tent. The camera work is breathtaking, stringing together the loose, mildly absorbing plot in a montage of cinematic perfection.

Unfortunately, Johnny Chen's soundtrack is jarringly cheesy 'Muzak' reminiscent of "Cirque du Soleil", contrasting darkly with the impressive cinematography. Whether the contrast is intentional or

not is completely irrelevant since it merely distracts and annoys the viewer.

The acting is absolutely outstanding; probably the best in recent films since the twin war epics "Saving Private Ryan" and "Thin Red Line". Lu Lu (Xiu Xiu) makes her cinematic debut in this film, continuing an impressive theatrical family history. It is the stunning combination of her talent and her innocent inexperience that make her spellbinding performance. Lopsang (Lao Jin) "...is in life very much like his character... A very simple man to the point of being profound." States director Joan Chen. Lopsang adds to an impressive cinematic career from which he has received wide acclaim. His perfection in this film is so simple and seemingly effortless it quietly complements both Lu Lu's performance and Chen's directing.

Joan Chen's directing made this movie, however it was Lu Lu and Lopsang and Lu Yue, the director of cinematography, who make it worth seeing.

The unfortunate soundtrack and confusing, loose plot of the movie are thankfully drowned out by the work of these people, creating an impressive art film, if viewed in the right light.

'Xiu Xiu the Sent Down Girl' is now playing at Cinema du Parc

A Classic Piece of Hollywood Fluff

Mumford makes its debut

BY SIMON RABINOVITCH

Take a dull, but affable psychologist. Stick him in an average middle-America town. Give him some patients with basic problems. Conjure up a far fetched secret about his past. Toss a not-so-steamy love interest at him. And ... FILM!

Follow the preceding six step plan if you are interested in testing the will power of audiences: how boring can a movie be before people who shelled out ten dollars to see it get up and leave? Unfortunately, Lawrence Kasdan, the man who conceived the story for "Mumford," is not writing a sociology thesis. Rather, he is in the business of entertaining people and he certainly missed the mark with his new film.

"Mumford" is the story of a young psychologist (conveniently named Mumford) who, having set up shop only four months earlier, has already attracted an array of patients from his small town (also called Mumford). He treats them in a straightforward manner, never prying too much and always listening. In one of his first starring roles, Loren Dean plays the honest, hardworking doctor.

The plot takes an unexpected twist when Mumford reveals the lurid details from earlier in his life to a patient he has befriended. Mumford had been - you guessed it

- a rogue agent for the International Revenue Service. He engaged in a romantic tryst with his IRS partner's wife, was addicted to cocaine, and fabricated evidence in the hot pursuit of tax evaders. He tried to escape his past by changing his name, moving to a small town and opening his practise, even though he had no formal training in psychology. Trouble looms for Mumford when the town's other thera-

pists grow jealous of his success and decide to investigate his background.

Mumford, no longer the junkie adulterer, is essentially a good guy, respected by all the locals. Hope Davis, who recently garnered acclaim for her role in Arlington Road plays the beautiful woman that falls for him. Her character suffers from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and is slowly brought back to health by the caring doctor. Tragically, Mumford's world is in the midst of closing in just as they profess their love for each other.

Kasdan, the writer, director and producer, is best known for his work on "The Big Chill" and "Wyatt Earp." Judging by his latest effort, it will remain that way for a while. To be fair, he deserves credit for the five minute clip showing Mumford as a depraved IRS agent. It was the most enjoy-

therapy sessions would have added a quirky edge to the movie. Instead, he settled for an adolescent girl suffering from image problems, an obese man unsatisfied with his position in life, and a middle-aged woman addicted to shopping. None are characters that the viewer has not seen before in other movies or, for that matter, real life.

One character from Mumford did stand out from the lot, in terms of both humour and casting. Skip Skiperton is a young skateboard-riding Bill Gates whose company, Panda Modern, is the town's chief employer. In his spare time he has been working on the design of an anatomically functioning female "companion."

Jason Lee, who has attracted quite a cult following after acting in Kevin Smith films Mallrats and Chasing Amy, was chosen to portray Skip. Lee, an internationally accomplished skateboarder before breaking into Hollywood, was easily believable in his role. Nevertheless, fans of his will be left wondering by his decision to accept a part in Mumford, far different from Smith's edgy breed of film. His role in Smith's forthcoming Dogma is much more highly anticipated.

The only McGill students who might want to consider seeing this movie are aspiring psychologists. Are the long hours of study and monotonous lectures really worth it? According to Kasdan, anyone who can shut up and listen would be just fine at treating mental illness.

Beyond psychology students, however, Mumford is a movie to avoid. It is yet another in the long line of unspectacular Hollywood flicks that leave the viewer wondering why.



able and original segment of the movie, not the typical FBI or CIA fare. Perhaps it would have been a better idea to make the entire film about Mumford's (the man's) wild tax collecting days, leaving a five minute epilogue to detail his reformation as an uninteresting psychologist.

Kasdan had ample room to get his creative juices flowing with Mumford's patients. Bizarre personalities and comical

Turntabling as an Artform

Canadian DJs scratching out a niche

BY GABE FLORES

A sure sign of the establishment of turntabling as an artform is the premiere of the Canadian DJ final here in Montréal. Featuring P-Love and McGill's own A-Trak, this 'head-to-head' style competition measures each candidate's abilities in beat-juggling and scratching.

October 2nd, 1999.

While Montréal's electronica scene has been bubbling with happenings since the early nineties, this is the first time turntabling has been at the forefront. Montréal's scene has been notorious for its love affair with house music, and only now is drum n' bass bursting onto the scene.

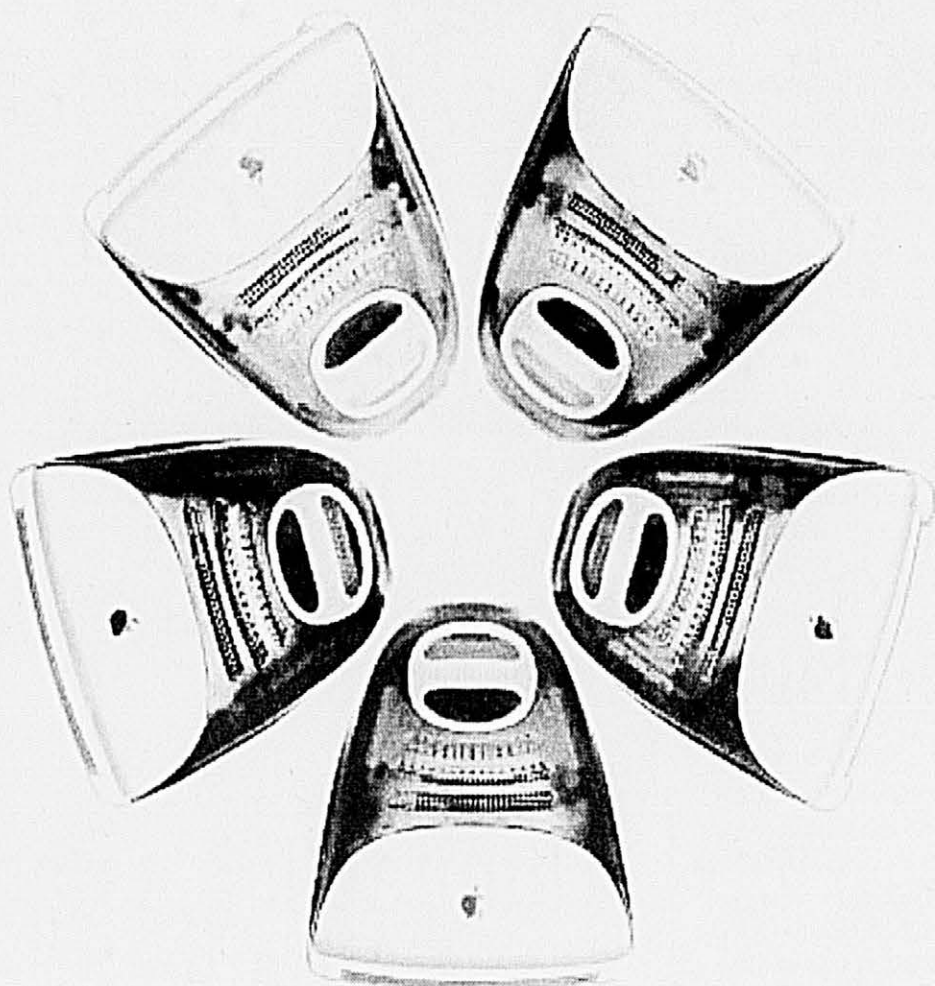
The next logical step would be turntabling. However, Montrealers has been notorious for their unwillingness to change. What doesn't help is the number of crooked promoters and busted parties that have damaged the confidence of electronica aficionados.

At the crux of the problem for turntabling is its slow acceptance as an artform. DJs has long been accused of intellectual hijacking by grabbing samples from unknowing musicians and morphing it to suite their sets. In the hopes of dispelling this perception, the goal of ITF has been to "form industry awareness for the recognition and the development of the turntable as a musical instrument while providing the greatest worldwide DJ competitions." A lofty goal to say the least, consider the ITF Canadian DJ final a step in the right direction.



Hosted by Shades of Culture's frontman Revolution, the event serves as a springboard for local talent to advance into the ITF world finals and category battles. The 1st annual ITF Canadian Deejay Finals will be coming to Montréal on

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THE ART DUMMY

Art's Bear Essentials

Smoky has left the building

BY JOHN ORTVED

I was bored — plain and simple.

I had been staring at these paintings for more than half an hour and neither my level of comprehension, nor my level of interest had increased. My mind began to wonder as my oh-so limited attention span became exhausted.

It wandered to Pooh corner, to Jellystone park, or more specifically, to bear country. The art that presented itself was neither scintillating, nor impressive. Trying to describe it to my notebooks was becoming painful. Bears are much more exciting. Instead of taking note of what was in front of me, I decided to write down just about everything I have ever learned about those furry mammals.

For reasons that need not be explained here, over the course of my life, I have accumulated and retained a surprisingly large amount of information pertaining to bears. So, instead of telling you about boring art I didn't like or understand, I thought I'd share some crumbs of information on a subject I seem to know a little something about. After all, art doesn't just exist to be seen, it is there to inspire, to get you thinking. The aforementioned pieces did just that. Granted, about bears, but they provoked thought nonetheless.

None of the following is researched. It is all the information I have collected regarding the subject, scribbled in my notebook as I pretended to be interested in pictures on a wall. All of the following is true, as far as I know.

THE BEAREST FACTS:

-Bears, if classified by their skulls, are part of the pig family. Just like Lions are part of the cat family, bears are part of the pig family (see note).

-Bears eat blueberries. They do this by sweeping both their arms through blueberry bushes and collecting the berries in their paws. They can actually live on berries when food is scarce.

-Polar bears are the fiercest animal on earth.

-Kodiak bears are just grizzlies from the Kodiak region.

-Bears do not hunt humans. They will only attack if you piss them off. The best way to accomplish this is to threaten their young.

-Bears mark their territory by scratching the bark of trees. Entering a bear's marked territory is another good way to piss them off.

-If we did not have weapons, bears would be the top of the food chain.

If you are involved in an aggressive, bear-type situation:

-Bears can swim, a lot better than humans. Don't try to escape from a bear by swimming.

-Do not climb trees to escape from a bear. Black bears can climb trees with incredible ease. Grizzlies can knock down trees.

-Loud noises scare bears. If a black bear is in your camp, robbing you of your KD, banging pots and pans may scare him off. Then again, he may not be intimidated by Tefal in which case you have just attracted great amounts of attention to yourself.

-If a grizzly bear attacks you, play dead.

-If a black bear attacks you, do not play dead. Despite theories that animals will not eat something they believe is dead/that they have not killed themselves, black bears are scavengers and will strip dead animals of any reasonably fresh meat. If you are playing dead, your meat is going to smell very fresh. Playing dead makes logical sense until Yogi starts chewing on your head.

-Grizzlies rarely kill people by eating them. They smack them with their paws, breaking their necks.

-If a bear is chasing you, run downhill. Do not run uphill. Bears' front paws are shorter than their hind paws, thereby inhibiting their speed on any downward slope.

-Other than running downhill, do not try and outrun a bear. They will catch up.

-If hunting or trying to protect yourself from a bear, do not use a .22 rifle, bow and arrow, knife, or blunt object. A large gun will do the trick if aimed properly, but attempting a John Candy à la Great Outdoors will most likely result in a significantly less hilarious outcome.

*Note to pig farmers: Just because bears and pigs are from the same extended family does not mean that they will get along. Placing pet bears and pet pigs in the same pen can have disastrous results. Each pet should have its own food dish since bears are not prone to sharing. Sheep herding has been accomplished by pigs before, never by bears. Allowing a pig to sleep in the house provides much ensuing hilarity. Allowing bears to do the same is less funny.

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CD Reviews

FLABBY
MODERN TUNES FOR EVERYBODY
(ISBA)

Modern Tunes For Everybody is a musi-



cally well-produced album. It is filled with intricate sample-based grooves of many types, varying rhythmically from big breakbeats to swing and bossa feels. The instrumentation and arrangements are catchy and creative.

However, the tragic flaw of this record and is the inane lead vocalist. Mind you, he's not really a vocalist, he sort of rhymes poetry without rapping. But with lyrics like "For once in my life I'd like to cry, 'cause I can't help what I'm feeling inside", its not really poetry either. It's more like beatnik rap for idiots.

With songs like Track 1 and 2 [cheek-a-boom and diggy-doggy-do], I also see no reason to include every word in the CD sleeve. But this sort of unwarranted vanity from Flabby is not isolated, the back cover names the members by saying, "Flabby are: three good guys", and goes on to say "Flabby is a way of life". Deep down, I hope these guys are just kidding.

Track 12, the sole instrumental on the

disc, features a funky break with a B3 boogie solo. Without the poet fumbling over unrequited love cliches, it's the runaway best track for me.

To top it all off, the last song (Track 13) is named after the lyrical refrain: "Everybody loves me" (no joke). After a cheesy musical opening reminiscent of the Disney Sunday Night Movie Theme Song, the poet cleverly chimes in "...I've got a lot of friends ma-king noise and I have a lot of fun. Ha, ha, ha, ha...". You too could have a lot of friends making noise: Flabby is a way of life. Ha, ha, ha, skip it.

- Aaron Waisglass

SCRITTI POLITTI
TINSELTOWN TO THE BOOGIEDOWN
(ISBA)

This cool new EP from Scritti Politti, Tinseltown to the Boogiedown, seems to be a sure dancefloor hit. In the hip hop verses, producer David Gamson lays down lush funky breakbeats as his emcee trades tight rhymes with special guest Mos'Def. Mos'Def rocks as usual and gets his props from Scritti Politti: "Mos'Def, most definitely the rap chief". However, the vocal chorus sounds like N'Sync. While this melodic chorus has a certain pop hook, it sort of kills the funk.

As if the cheese chorus of Tinseltown is foreshadowing the horrible B-side, "Umm," which is completely pop — sort of Brit pop. Hip hop and Brit pop? I played Tinseltown on Saturday night when some people were over and everyone was digging the funky single groove. Tragically, this lame uplifting B-side (of which I was

unaware at the time) kicks in "Ooh... la, la, la..." and all of a sudden I'm in a world of shame denying all accusations that the



CD is mine.

Tracks three to five feature a slick line-up of remix artists vying to redeem the disc on the hip hop front. On track three, Les of the Beatnuts lends a darker texture to the track with a haunting vibes riff and a grungy muted horn sliding in and out. Top this off with some deep old-school scratches and you've got a new and improved rough version sounding way better than the original. Psycho Les and the other remixers also make a refreshing minimum of the N'Sync bit.

Pete Rock brings the party to his mix with dubbish delays and a bouncy beat. Former Tribe producer Ali Shaheed Muhammad does the final remix. This beat features the thumpy breaks and lax jazz sound made popular on Beats Rhymes and Life. This mix really does justice to Mos'Def's style while its jazz riff somehow sings along with him. The bottom line is that Tinseltown is a cool single for shakin' booty with cool remixes, just keep the B-side on the low profile.

- Aaron Waisglass

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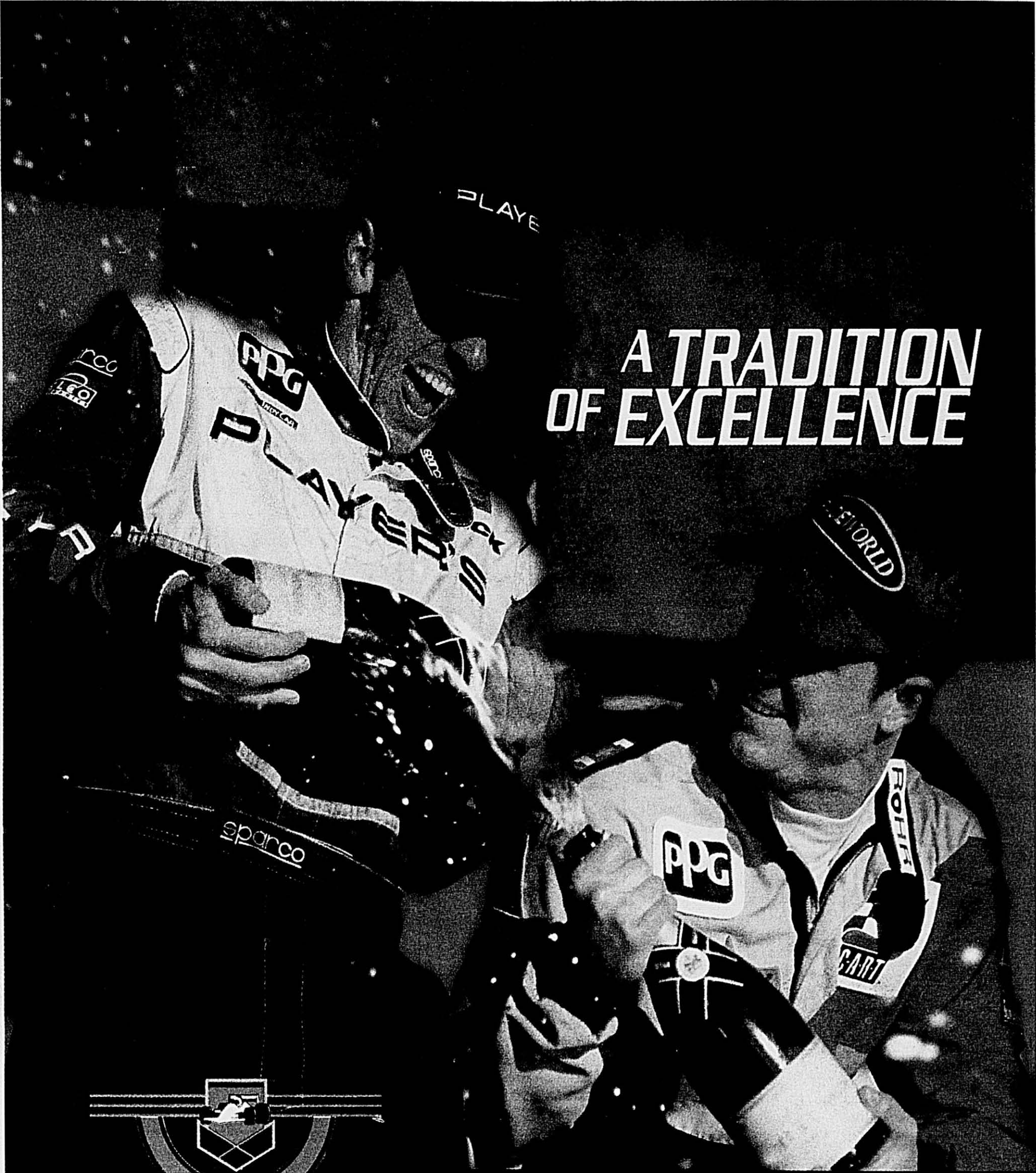
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